

## Message Text

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46

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SSM-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 /068 W

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R 100912Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3813

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JAKATA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 1923

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E O 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PFOR, RP, LY

SUBJ: GOP PREPARES FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH MUSLIM REBELS (MNLF)

REF: A) MANILA 19131; B) MANILA 17207; C) A-266; D) MANILA 75 9003

SUMMARY: YESTERDAY (DEC 9) GOP ANNOUNCED COMPOSITION OF TEAM WHICH WILL LEAVE FOR LIBYA ON DEC 11 TO NEGOTIATE WITH MNLF. GOVERNMENT ALSO RELEASED WHAT IT IMPLIED IS LATEST MNLF NEGOTIATING POSITION, BUT WHICH IN FACT IS DOCUMENT DATING FROM JUNE 1975 WHICH GOP HAS REJECTED IN PAST. PREDICTABLY, TODAY'S MANILA PRESS CONTAINS OBVIOUSLY PRE-COOKED DENUNCIATION OF ALLEGED REBEL POSITION BY THREE MUSLIM GOVERNORS OF MINDANAO PROVINCES. THIS KIND OF TRANSPARENT SOPHISTRY DOES NOT BODE WELL FOR NEGOTIATIONS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN IN TRIPOLI ON DEC 15. END SUMMARY.

1. MANILA PRESS OF DEC 9 ANNOUNCED COMPOSITION OF GOP NEGOTIATING TEAM WHICH WILL LEAVE FOR TRIPOLI ON DEC 11.  
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TEAM WILL BE HEADED BY DEFENSE UNDERSECRETARY BARBERO. MEMBERS WILL BE AMBASSADOR TO SAUDI ARABIA PANGADAMAN, AMBASSADOR TO ALGERIA CASTRO, REGION XII COMMISSIONER DATUMANONG AND HEAD OF SOUTHERN PHILIPPINE DEVELOPMENT

AUTHORITY ABDUL KARIM SIDRI.

2. PRESS ALSO ANNOUNCED WITHOUT COMMENT MNLF "NINE POINTS," IMPLYING THAT THESE REPRESENT LATEST REBEL POSITION. DEMANDS INCLUDE "SELF-GOVERNMENT" FOR TRADITIONALLY MUSLIM AREAS OF MINDANAO, BASILAN, SULU AND PALAWAN; CONTROL OF LOCAL SECURITY FORCES, AND ISLAMIC COURT SYSTEM, ISLAMIC SCHOOL SYSTEM, ETC. "NINE POINTS" (FULL TEXT OF WHICH CARRIED BY GOVERNMENT NEWS AGENCY PNA) ARE IN FACT MERELY A RE-RELEASE OF DOCUMENT SUBMITTED BY MNLF THROUGH ISLAMIC CONFERENCE ON JUNE 14, 1975 AND SUBSEQUENTLY REJECTED WITH MUCH PUBLICITY (REF D) BY GOP. PREDICTABLY, TODAY'S MANILA PRESS (DEC 10) CONTAINS VEHEMENT REJECTION OF "NINE POINTS" BY MUSLIM GOVERNORS OF MINDANAO. SOURCE AT DFA CONFIRMED THAT "NINE POINTS" DID NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT LATEST MNLF POSITION, BUT HAD MERELY BEEN PULLED OUT OF DRAWER FOR ANOTHER ROUND OF RITUAL DENUNCIATION.

3. SOURCES AT DFA ALSO MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A) PRECONDITIONS FOR NEGOTIATIONS ANNOUNCED BY ADMIRAL ESPALDON ON NOV 4 (REF B) HAVE BEEN MODIFIED (NO FURTHER DETAILS PROVIDED);

B) THERE WILL BE SECOND ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS OR CONSULTATIONS IN JIDDA TO INFORM ISLAMIC CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT OF TRIPOLI RESULTS (IF ANY);

C) DFA IS STUDYING VARIOUS FORMULAS FOR LOCAL AUTONOMY AS PRACTICED IN IRAN, THE SUDAN, AND ELSEWHERE.

INFORMED MUSLIM SOURCE IN DFA SAID HE IS NOT REPEAT NOT OPTIMISTIC THAT TALKS WILL MAKE PROGRESS UNLESS GOP BACKS AWAY FROM CURRENT POSITION THAT EXISTING ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS IN MINDANAO CONSTITUTE "AUTONOMY." SOURCE HAS SEEN NO SIGNS TO DATE THAT SERIOUS REEVALUATION IS TAKING PLACE.  
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4. COMMENT: IT IS POSSIBLE THAT YEAR AND HALF OLD "NINE POINTS" ARE STILL CLOSE TO CURRENT MNLF THINKING. MOST RECENT EVIDENCE OF ACTUAL MNLF POSITION IS DESCRIBED IN REF C, AND DOES NOT SUGGEST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN REBEL DEMANDS. NEVERTHELESS, GOVERNMENT PLOY OF UNILATERALLY ANNOUNCING 18-MONTH-OLD POSITION ONE DAY, IMPLYING THAT IT IS LATEST POSITION OF OPPONENTS, AND THEN DENOUNCING IT THE NEXT DAY, SMACKS OF GOP SOPHISTRY AT ITS WORST, AND DOES NOT LEND CONFIDENCE THAT FORTHCOMING NEGOTIATIONS ARE LIKELY TO BE SERIOUS OR SUCCESSFUL.  
SULLIVAN

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## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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JAKATA  
JIDDA  
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